WHAT IS CLAIMED

1. A therapeutic method comprising enhancing wound healing in a mammal afflicted with a wound comprising administering an effective amount of a composition comprising proepithelin (PEPI) or a subunit thereof to said mammal.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises an effective amount of secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor (SLPI), or a subunit thereof.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the proepithelin comprises an amino acid sequence having any one of SEQ ID NO:1, 2, 4, or 5.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor comprises an amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the proepithelin is produced recombinantly.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the proepithelin is encoded by a nucleic acid comprising SEQ ID NO:3 or SEQ ID NO:6.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the mammal is a human.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the wound involves epithelial tissue.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the wound involves skin, respiratory tract, kidney, uterus or cervix.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the wound involves connective tissue.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the wound is due to surgical intervention.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the wound is created by accidental trauma.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof is administered prior to creation of the wound.

14. The method of claim 2, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or subunit thereof is administered prior to creation of the wound.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof is administered after the wound occurs.

16. The method of claim 2, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or subunit thereof is administered after the wound occurs.

17. The method of claims 1, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof is administered parenterally, by injection, infusion, or topical application.

18. The method of claims 1, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or subunit thereof is administered parenterally, by injection, infusion, or topical application.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein the mammal has a deficiency of endogenous proepithelin, secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or both.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein the rate of wound healing is enhanced.

21. The method of claim 1, wherein inflammation is inhibited.

22. The method of claim 1, wherein the proepithelin subunit is an inter-EP1 linker region.

23. The method of claim 2, wherein the SLPI subunit comprises the C-terminal domain or a subunit thereof.

24. A therapeutic method comprising inhibiting inflammation in a mammal afflicted with a wound comprising administering an effective amount of a composition comprising proepithelin (PEPI) or a subunit thereof to said mammal.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the composition further comprises an effective amount of secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor (SLPI), or a subunit thereof.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein the proepithelin comprises an amino acid sequence having any one of SEQ ID NO:1, 2, 4, or 5.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor comprises an amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9.

28. The method of claim 24, wherein the proepithelin is produced recombinantly.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the proepithelin is encoded by a nucleic acid comprising SEQ ID NO:3 or SEQ ID NO:6.

30. The method of claim 24, wherein the mammal is a human.

31. The method of claim 24, wherein the wound involves epithelial tissue.

32. The method of claim 24 wherein the wound involves skin, respiratory tract, kidney, uterus or cervix.

33. The method of claim 24 wherein the wound involves connective tissue.

34. The method of claim 24, wherein the wound is due to surgical intervention.

35. The method of claim 24, wherein the wound is created by accidental trauma.

36. The method of claim 24, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof is administered prior to creation of the wound.

37. The method of claim 25, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or subunit thereof is administered prior to creation of the wound.

38. The method of claim 24, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof is administered after the wound occurs.

39. The method of claim 25, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or subunit thereof is administered after the wound occurs.

40. The method of claims 24, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof is administered parenterally, by injection, infusion, or topical application.

41. The method of claims 24, wherein the secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or subunit thereof is administered parenterally, by injection, infusion, or topical application.

42. The method of claim 24, wherein the mammal has a deficiency of endogenous proepithelin, secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor or both.

43. The method of claim 24, wherein the rate of wound healing is enhanced.

44. The method of claim 24, wherein inflammation is inhibited.

45. The method of claim 24, wherein the proepithelin subunit is an inter-EP1 linker region.

46. The method of claim 25, wherein the SLPI subunit comprises the C-terminal domain or a subunit thereof.

47. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of proepithelin, or a subunit thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

48. The composition of claim 47, wherein the effective amount can enhance or accelerate wound healing.

49. The composition of claim 47, wherein the effective amount can reduce inflammation.

50. The composition of claim 47, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof is of human origin.

51. The composition of claim 47, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof comprises a polypeptide having amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO:1, 2, 4 or 5.

52. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of proepithelin, or a subunit thereof, in combination with SLPI, or a subunit thereof, and in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

53. The composition of claim 52, wherein the effective amount can enhance or accelerate wound healing.

54. The composition of claim 52, wherein the effective amount can reduce inflammation.

55. The composition of claim 52, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof and/or SLPI or subunit thereof are of human origin.

56. The composition of claim 52, wherein the proepithelin or subunit thereof comprises a polypeptide having amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO:1, 2, 4 or 5.

57. The composition of claim 52, wherein the SLPI or subunit thereof comprises a polypeptide having amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO:7 or 9.